GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:650
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Emissions from Mobile Towers
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the risk of fatal diseases like cancer etc. are increasing due to rampant setting up of mobile towers in densely populated districts of different States of the country including Jharkhand;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto along with the steps taken by the Government to reduce the risk of such fatal diseases associated with the mobile tower radiations;

(c) whether the Government has launched 'Tarang Sanchar' web portal for information sharing on mobile towers and Electromagnetic Radiations therefrom; and

(d) if so, the details, the salient features and the objectives thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)

(a) & (b) Madam, with regard to impact of Electromagnetic Field (EMF) emissions from mobile towers on health, World Health Organization (WHO) has referred to approximately 25,000 articles published around the world over past 30 years, and based on an in-depth review of scientific literature, has stated, "Despite the feeling of some people that more research needs to be done, scientific knowledge in this area is now more extensive than for most chemicals." WHO has concluded - "current evidence does not confirm the existence of any health consequences from exposure to low level electromagnetic fields".
In September 2013, WHO in online question and answers have mentioned that "Studies to date provide no indication that environmental exposure to RF fields, such as from base stations, increases the risk of cancer or any other disease."
With regard to expansion of cancer due to EMF emission, Tata Memorial Centre is of the view, "There are no conclusive studies in the world about emission of RF electromagnetic field from cell phone tower and risk of cancer."
Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has been monitoring global developments and has already taken necessary steps and adopted stricter norms for safety from EMF emmissions from mobile towers. Government of India has been taking due precautions and necessary actions in respect of EMF radiation emitted from mobile towers through various guidelines & norms issued from time to time taking into account the international standards/norms. To examine the effect of EMF emissions from base stations and mobile phones an Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) was constituted on 24.08.2010. Further, based on the recommendations by the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC), the norms for exposure limit for the Radio Frequency Field (Base Station Emissions) in India have been made 10 times more stringent than the existing limits prescribed by International Commission on Non Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) and recommended by World Health Organisation (WHO). Further, Government of India has taken adequate steps to ensure that Telecommunications Service Providers strictly adhere to these prescribed norms.
All new mobile BTS sites start radiating commercially only after ensuring adherence to prescribed norms and after submission of certificate to this effect to relevant Telecom Enforcement Resource & Monitoring (TERM) field offices of DoT. In order to ensure compliance to the prescribed stricter precautionary norms of EMF radiation from mobile tower, the extensive audit of compliance of self-certificates being submitted by telecom service providers and Base Transceiver Station (BTS) sites is carried out by TERM field units of DoT. In case, any BTS site is found to violate the prescribed EMF norms, actions are taken to put a penalty of Rs. 10 lakh per BTS per incidence including closing of BTS site, if the violation persists. Additionally, the BTS sites against which there are public complaints are also tested by TERM Cell.

(c) & (d) Yes. DoT has launched "Tarang Sanchar", a web portal for Information sharing on Mobile Towers and EMF Emission Compliances, with the objective to generate confidence and conviction with regard to safety and harmlessness from mobile towers, clearing any myths and misconceptions. The portal can be accessed at www.tarangsanchar.gov.in. The EMF Portal provides a public interface where an easy map-based search feature has been provided for viewing the mobile towers in vicinity of any locality. By click of a button, information on EMF compliance status of mobile towers can be accessed. Detailed information about any tower site, if requested, will be sent on email to the users. Additionally, any person can request for EMF emission measurement at a location by paying a nominal fee of Rs 4000/- online. Local Telecom Enforcement Resource and Monitoring (TERM) field unit of DoT will conduct the test and the test reports will be provided. The portal also has 'EMF Overview' and 'Learn' Sections, which provide numerous articles, booklets and videos, to further educate the citizens about EMF and coverage of telecom services. Public can also access the 'DoT Initiatives' section which has information on various leaflets, articles and Frequently Asked Questions. The portal has the complete collated technical details of over 14.5 lakh base stations (BTSs) spread across the country of all technologies (2G, 3G, 4G etc.) and of all Telecom Service Providers (TSPs).